

Planning Commission

► Agency Mission

To provide the Board of Supervisors and/or the Board of Zoning Appeals with recommendations on land use policies and plans that will result in orderly, balanced, and equitable County growth, and to provide administrative support to the Planning Commission.

► Trends/Issues

In the last four years, the Planning Commission has held 90-100 Commission and committee meetings per year to ensure public input on land use matters affecting the greater Fairfax community, and has maintained a concurrence rate of at least 98 percent with final actions by the Board of Supervisors. Such a high concurrence rate demonstrates the level of commitment undertaken by the Commission in ensuring that the majority of issues raised by both applicants and surrounding neighborhoods have been resolved when it makes its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

A related trend that has resulted from this continuous work on the part of District Commission members has been the necessity for a higher number of short-term deferrals, whether of initial public hearings or scheduled decisions, and often, the necessity of subsequent deferrals of scheduled Board of Supervisors' public hearings. This, of course, impacts on the number of notifications that must be sent by our office since any deferred public hearing by either body requires subsequent first-class letters being sent to all abutting and adjacent property owners that received the initial notice if the deferral is under thirty (30) days. For longer-term deferrals, the applicant is required to resend a notice, and our office verifies that the information sent is correct and up-to-date. Given the growing complexity of cases due to in-fill issues, it is expected that this trend will continue to grow and may have subsequent impacts on the work of the Commission staff.

While the number of Planning Commission regular meetings has remained fairly stable over this time period, the number of special committees created by the Commission has increased due to the interest of the members in reaching out to other boards and commissions on related areas of interest. The Commission now operates joint committees with the School Board, Park Authority Board, Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board, Transportation Advisory Commission and the Environmental Quality Advisory Commission, who meet on a regular basis, as well as its ongoing standing and special committees established to ease transactions of normal business. The Commission also establishes ad-hoc committees, as needed, on special-interest issues that may arise, such as its current Residential Development Criteria Committee. Such committees are established for specific study areas of a short-term nature that may require multiple meetings with County staff and relevant interested parties. While this results in many additional Committee meetings for its members, the Commission has found that it can handle these areas of study, where the Board of Supervisors desires Commission input, much more productively by this operational method.

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In this same time period, the Commission's administrative staff was reduced by 11 percent, but through streamlined practices has been able to:

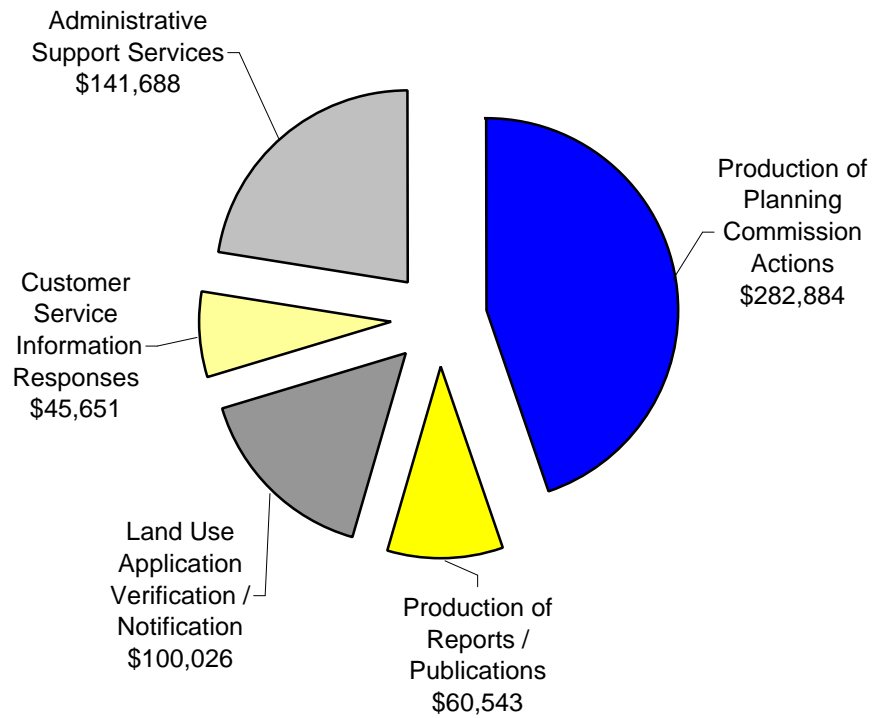
- Increase the summary and verbatim completion rates performed by the Clerical branch to ensure that Commission action information is available to the public in a shorter time period and that draft minutes are available approximately one month from the actual Commission session;
- Continue to provide fast, flexible, and dependable customer service by responding to most information requests within two working days;
- Continue to verify all notifications for land use applications scheduled for public hearings before both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors in an expeditious fashion to ensure that no deferrals of hearings have been necessary due to notification discrepancies;
- Streamline the citizen review process for Area Plan nominations, yet insure that more abutting and adjacent homeowners and civic associations become aware and involved in the review process through broader notification procedures;
- Facilitate the creation of a three-part video series on the Land Use Process in Fairfax County, in simple language, that can be shown regularly on Channel 16 to explain both the Comprehensive Plan Review process and the land use application review process in general terms for citizens with very limited knowledge of the County's system;
- Initiate a presence on the County's website to provide citizen-friendly information on the Planning Commission, its staff, upcoming schedules of public hearings, actions and recommendations taken, as well as facilitating the ability of citizens to sign up to speak at upcoming hearings and contacting the Commission and its staff on a 24/7 basis.

► Summary of All Agency CAPS

CAPS Number	CAPS Title	CAPS Net Cost	CAPS Number of Positions/SYE
36-01	Production of Planning Commission Actions	\$282,884	2/2.6
36-02	Production of Reports/Publications	\$60,543	1/0.5
36-03	Land Use Application Verification/Notification	\$100,026	2/1.7
36-04	Customer Service Information Responses	\$45,651	1/1.6
36-05	Administrative Support Services	\$141,688	2/1.6
TOTAL Agency		\$630,792	8/8

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Total FY 2002 Adopted Budget Expenditures = \$630,792

Total FY 2002 Adopted Budget Net Cost = \$630,792